

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2022

DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT

We have spent the last year continuing to pursue a wide range of strategic issues affecting the Borough and Kings Langley, together with dealing with issues raised by individual constituents.. Alan Anderson is the Portfolio Holder for Planning & Infrastructure, and Alan Johnson has been an active member of the Housing & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee, the Licensing Committee and the Health Scrutiny Committee..

Covid 19 and variants

The effects of the pandemic continued to be felt in all areas of Council business and Council services as the country returned to a new norm. Thankfully the good work of Council staff in 2020-21 continued into the last financial year with key services running as close to normal as possible, e.g. refuse collection, housing services; supporting and enforcing Government safety measures and supporting wherever possible community initiatives to help those who have needed more assistance. It has been a real team effort.

Green Belt/Planning/Housebuilding and employment

The Local Plan process has been reconfigured in the light of a number of compelling factors, including:

- The need to look more closely at the issues raised in the initial consultation;
- To assess the implications of the pandemic, specifically the changes to work and retail patterns potentially releasing non-viable space for residential use;
- Carrying out more detailed work on the likely environmental and recreational impact to ensure the proposed levels of growth and sites are most appropriate; and
- To incorporate expected changes to the national planning system

There is also a need to take account of the implications of the Hemel Place Strategy which aims to regenerate the town centre, rejuvenate the Maylands Business Area, including residential development.

The new Local Plan timetable anticipates a further round of consultation in June 2023 (Regulation 18) and adoption of the new Local Plan in October 2025. Looking further ahead, Dacorum are working with St Albans Council on the Hemel Gardens Communities Programme which envisages a new and sustainable development to the north and east of Hemel Hempstead. It will create 11k houses and 10k jobs by 2050.

Motorway Services

There are 3 Motorway Service Area (MSA) applications still 'in play' for this part of the M25, and whilst none are located in the Borough they do have potentially major consequences for Kings Langley and Dacorum. The three operators are Welcome (Junction 15/16) where a Highways England assessment is due shortly, Extra (Junction 16/17) where a new application is expected located on the opposite carriageway to that previously proposed and MOTO (Junction 20) which appears to be 'on hold' at the present time.

Climate Emergency Strategy and High-Level Action Plan

The Borough Council's pledged to reduce to reach net zero by 2030 for its direct greenhouse gas emissions and by 2050 for emissions where the Council does not control the energy use of buildings it rents or leases. It has now published a strategy and action plan setting out how these goals will be achieved.

To support this, Dacorum's Climate Action Network (Dacorum CAN) has been established to encourage parish and town councils, residents and local groups to "think global and act local." Melanie Parr will be talking more about this work at tonight's Annual Parish Meeting

In closing, it continues to be a real honour and a privilege to represent and serve the parish on Dacorum Borough Council over the last year. As "dual councillors", we would also like to thank parish colleagues and staff for their support and professionalism.

Alan Anderson & Alan Johnson,
Dacorum Borough Councillors.